



Technical Director Nancy Godfrey '56 explains WCSR control board to Harvard visitor from WHRB

The Voice . . .

By DOROTHY COFFMAN '55

"YOU are tuned to 600, the Voice of Smith College, WCSR in Northampton." Eighteen times a day, these words emanate from the station on Prospect Street, bringing good music, drama and news to students from one end of the campus to the other.

Only six short years ago, WCSR was little more than a dream—but it was a dream that had to be fulfilled. Campus interest in a radio for Smith, first aroused in 1941 when students produced shows over the local commercial stations, found a champion in Marjorie Boselly '48 when she established a Radio Committee. This group attended intercollegiate radio conferences and gathered information about other college radio stations.

At last in April 1948, President Davis gave the project official approval. The entire campus gave support by vote to place WCSR on Blanket Tax—and by a donation of \$2 each to the cause. A grand total of \$4,100 put WCSR on the air in November of that year.

First Intercollegiate Network

In the spring of 1950 WCSR joined Amherst's WAMF in the first intercollegiate radio network in the United States. The union was celebrated with a great broadcast emanating from Davis Center where more than 500 persons active in radio and educational fields in the Connecticut Valley, Boston, and New York areas witnessed the opening ceremonies.

Since that day PBS, the Pioneer Broadcasting System, has successfully combined the talents of Smith and Amherst.

During one week each spring, for example, the PBS Drama Festival features eight to fourteen plays written or adapted for radio by Smith and Amherst students. All the roles are enacted by students and directed by station personnel. WCSR has a full-time drama director, Anne Cadman '55, who last year did excellent work on her hour-long Sunday Night Drama Show. Other network programs included afternoon and evening classical music features, disc-jockey shows which gave away free passes to the Academy of Music and the Calvin theatres, as well as United Press news shows, a Lucky Strike program, and a unique Friday morning show, "Breakfast with Boo and Bob," with Boo Barbour '55 in the studios at Smith and her friend Bob in the studios at Amherst.

WCSR also enjoys a healthy exchange of programming with other men's colleges. A spring trip to Yale's WYBC where they took over the broadcasting facilities, control board and all, for the entire evening, brought eight enthusiastic WCSR members back to Northampton with new broadcasting and business ideas as well as plaudits from the Yale men. WCSR entertains frequently, too. Harvard's WHRB evening broadcast at Smith featured special tape recordings that had been made at Harvard. Yale, MIT and Trinity all provided radio evenings at Smith last spring, and drew a large crowd of Smith girls to the studios at 10½ Prospect Street. Weekly tapes have been exchanged with the Princeton radio station, and WCSR conducted a request show for Dartmouth's WDBS.

First intercollegiate exchange of talent of the fall occurred October 29 when the station was turned over to Dartmouth students from 7 until 12 P.M. The boys directed, produced, and engineered their own show, while the Smith girls, who could have taken a holiday, preferred to observe.

Special Service to Smith

Throughout its six-year career, WCSR has served the interests of the College. As an educational station, it delights in broadcasting campus debates on such subjects as: "Should the College houses remain open until 10:30 on week nights?" and "Should juniors have unlimited overnights?" Special events play an important part in programming. Mr. Duke has made his radio debut at Smith with three original songs performed publicly for the first time over WCSR. Special programs are always planned for Thanksgiving, Easter and Christmas. Father's Day at Smith in May found WCSR with a household of proud parents whose daughters on the technical, advertising, announcing, and production staffs all wanted to show them why they had been working so hard for the "station."

Smith students write and adapt plays for WCSR's drama productions and interview visiting speakers and prominent campus personalities. Cynthia Walsh '39, president of the Hampshire Bookshop, gave bi-monthly book reviews last year which were well received. Campus talent shows featured Smith singing groups, quartets, piano recitals, and popular song contests. Classical and light music for listening or study fill most of the broadcasting schedule, but these special programs and others such as "Stories to Scare By" and "Tea at Two" (which actually serves cakes and cookies from the Mary-Marg) provide an excellent outlet for the originality and inventiveness of Smith students.

WCSR's future is being carefully planned. Broadcasting hours may be increased from 55 hours a week to 84 hours this fall. Plans are underway gradually to purchase better technical equipment; the new cable already assures much clearer reception on campus. New candidates for WCSR are given thorough training during a nine-week period in radio policies, techniques, and procedures.

Several former members of the WCSR staff have chosen careers in the radio and television fields. Nancy Kugel '51 is now employed by National Broadcasting Company where she does advertising and promotion work for WNBT; Anita Steinberg '53 is on the staff of Radio Free Europe; Barea Lamb '53 before her marriage had made a start in television writing; Ruth Wolff '53 is doing radio and television publicity for the United Community Service in Boston.

Current staff members are working hard on WCSR's broadcasting in anticipation of similar careers.

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